

*Confessions of a Former History Teacher*

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I am sorry.  
For thinking  
I was the teacher.  
For talking  
instead of listening.  
For believing  
and conceiving that  
my ways would  
teach you something about  
your history.  
For preaching  
to the choir.

I am sorry for  
pop quizzes,  
vocabulary tests,  
written exams, and  
tedious notes  
on the overhead projector.  
And for using them  
to gauge how much  
you know about  
your past.

I thought I had what  
I needed to show you  
what you needed

to know.  
The winds of change blew  
yourstories  
right past me.

I should have known that in  
one year  
you could tell me  
more about  
“Micronesian History”  
than I could ever hope to  
learn in a lifetime.

You were *jitdam*.<sup>1</sup>

I am sorry.  
That “F” was meant for me.

1. In Marshallese, *jitdam* means to study one’s genealogy.